

in confidence in his own judgment and consequent inflexibility of conduct ; while at the same time his successive schemes were ill-judged to a degree that made his disappointments ridiculous still more than pitiable. He was not an example of that *simple* obstinacy which I have mentioned before ; for he considered his measures, and did not want for reasons which seriously satisfied himself <5f their being most judicious. This confidence of opinion may be possessed by a person in whom it will be contemptible or mischievous ; but its proper place is in a very different character, and without it there can be no dignified actors in human affairs.

If, after it is seen how foolish this confidence appears as a feature in a weak character, it be inquired what, in a rightfully decisive person's manner of thinking it is that authorizes him in this firm assurance that his view of the concerns before him is comprehensive and accurate ; he may, in answer, justify his confidence on such grounds as these : that

not like the shapes of moonlight,
or like Ossian's ghosts, dim forms of
uncircumscribed shade ; that
..... in ,

in unconnected fragments; that
main object keeps its
eminence, and he perceives the
jeering which the

that perhaps several trains of
from different points lead him to the
same (CJDJ3.c;lusj.Or) : and
that he finds his Mgn^nL^ in.

It may be presumed that a high degree of this character is not attained without a considerable measure of that kind of certainty, with respect to the relations of things, which can be acquired only from experience and observation. A very protracted course of time, however, may not be indispensable for this discipline. An extreme vigilance in the exercise of observation, and a strong and strongly exerted power of generalizing on experience, may have made a comparatively short time enough to supply a large share of the wisdom derivable from these sources ; so that a man may long before he is old be rich in the benefits of experience, and therefore may have all the decision of judgment